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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

WEDNESDAY, November 23, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "DAY BEFORE NOTES." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics and the Extension Office, United States Department of Agriculture.

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Listeners, the day before can be a dreadful day. I'm referring right now to the day before Thanksgiving. It can be awful. You have so much to do and you don't know where to start. Just when you are most in need of ideas your mind won't click. Static or something settles in your brain and you can't tune in on a single good thought for the centerpiece or the relish plate or any of the other little jobs you left for the last minute. So sometimes on the day before, you're glad to hear a few easy ideas from somebody else.

Here are a few I've collected for you hoping they'll come in handy. If they don't help on tomorrow's dinner, maybe you can use them at Christmas time.

When you're serving a big Thanksgiving dinner, a salad course may be the last straw--the straw that breaks the housewife's back. Yet if the meal is to be appetizing and well-balanced, it needs some crisp fresh raw vegetables. Why not substitute a relish or appetizer plate? You can serve it right along with the turkey and save the time, the extra serving, and the dishwashing that a salad would require. On a large plate, a small platter, or even a low flat bowl arrange the traditional crisp white celery stalks along with yellow carrot sticks, red and white radishes, thin slices of raw white turnip, pieces of raw cauliflower, strips of red and green pepper, and quarters of small tomatoes. Of course, olives and little pickles and go on this plate, too.

Here's a hint that may save you time in making cranberry sauce. Run the raw berries through your food chopper. Then cook them for 5 minutes with sugar and a very little water. Turn into a dampened mold, chill and let stand until firm and jellied. This forms what you might call a cross or compromise between clear cranberry jelly and cranberry sauce where the whole berry, skin and all, is left in. Proportions for this quick product? About the same as for your regular sauce or jelly: 1 quart or 1 pound of the raw berries....1 cup of water....2 cups of sugar.

From Mrs. Elizabeth Berdan, a New Jersey home demonstration agent, come some centerpiece ideas for your Thanksgiving table. She suggests one centerpiece especially for the children -- in fact, one that the children can help make as well as enjoy. Go out to the fields or roadsides and cut some dry grass not more than 12 inches tall. Tie the bunches of this grass together near the top so that it will make it look like miniature corn shocks. Make little pumpkins of orange colored fondant with stems of candied citron -- or even bits of wood. Place the pumpkins near the corn shocks. Sprinkle around some of that chicken-corn candy children like so much. At the 10-cent store or novelty store buy a couple of miniature turkeys. A miniature log-cabin built by one of the children might complete the scene.

Of course, a centerpiece like that takes a little time. If you are in a hurry, you can find other artistic schemes that you can put together in a few minutes. For example, get out your big old wooden chopping bowl and fill it with bright fruits or vegetables. Make a mat for it of bright leaves or evergreen twigs. A wooden bowl of fruit looks especially nice on a maple table in a room with early American furnishings.

If you have a small round or square mirror, you can use that in the center of the table, framed with bright leaves, fruit, vegetables, flowers, nuts, pine cones or any other Thanksgiving combination. By the way, bright green parsley and curly kale both make lovely edgings for such a centerpiece. Another idea: Use bright red or green apples for candle holders. Just scoop out enough apple to put the base of the candle in.

Speaking of candles, some people say that they will burn longer and more slowly if you chill them in the refrigerator all night before using them.

And speaking of chilling in the refrigerator reminds me of whipped cream and mayonnaise. Disaster may befall your menu--eleventh hour disaster--if you don't keep your whipping cream cold enough or if you keep your mayonnaise too cold. Too much of a chill makes mayonnaise curdle. To bring out your mayonnaise the last minute and find it separated is no joke! It's even sadder when your dessert requires whipped cream and the cream won't whip. In such cases the trouble often is that the cream isn't cold enough to whip. So keep it in the refrigerator until the last minute, and if possible, chill your bowl and beater beforehand, too.

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